

In the Claims:

1-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Original) A vehicle floor system, comprising:

a hinge apparatus, comprising:

an elongated, planar bridge member, comprising opposite first and second edge portions and a surface; and

opposite first and second hinge members, each pivotally connected to a respective one of the first and second edge portions of the bridge member, wherein each hinge member comprises:

a base member; and

a planar upper panel extending outwardly from the base member, wherein each upper panel comprises opposite first and second surfaces;

wherein each hinge member is movable between a first position and a second position, and wherein the base members of the hinge members are in adjacent, contacting relationship when the first and second hinge members are both in the first position;

a pair of floor panels, each secured to the second surface of a respective one of the hinge member upper panels; and

a floor covering material supported by the floor panels, by the first surface of each upper panel, and by the bridge member surface.

14. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the floor covering material comprises carpet.

15. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 14, wherein the carpet comprises a pile having a dimension and wherein a width of the bridge member between the first and second edge portions is at least twice the pile dimension.

16. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 14, wherein the carpet comprises a pile having a compressed dimension and wherein a width of the bridge member between the first and second edge portions is at least twice the pile compressed dimension.

17. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the upper panel first surface of a hinge member is substantially flush with the bridge member surface when the hinge member is in the first position.

18. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the base members of the hinge members interlock with each other when the first and second hinge members are both in the first position.

19. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein each hinge member comprises a lower panel that extends outwardly from the base member in spaced-apart, opposing relationship with the upper panel, and wherein the upper and lower panels of each hinge member are configured to removably secure a respective one of the floor panels therebetween.

20. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the second surface of each upper panel comprises one or more projections that facilitate securing a floor panel to the upper panel.

21. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 19, wherein the lower panel of each hinge member comprises opposite first and second surfaces, and wherein the first surface of each lower panel comprises one or more projections that facilitate securing a floor panel to the lower panel.

22. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the lower panels of the hinge members are substantially coplanar when the first and second hinge members are both in the first position.

23. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the upper panel of each hinge member comprises a tapered free end.

24. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 19, wherein the lower panel of each hinge member comprises a tapered free end.

25. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein each hinge member is pivotally attached to a bridge member edge portion via a web of material having a thickness of less than about 1 millimeter (mm).

26. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 19, wherein each hinge member is pivotally attached to a bridge member edge portion via a web of material having a thickness of less than about 1 millimeter (mm).

27. (Original) The vehicle floor system of Claim 13, wherein the upper panel of each hinge member is substantially coplanar with the bridge member when in the first position, and wherein the upper panel of each hinge member is transverse to the bridge member when in the second position.